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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through station WRC and 43 other associate NBC stations, Tuesday, ~~September~~ **SEP 8** 1931 ★
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U. S. Department of Agriculture

How-do-you-do Farm and Home Hour Folks:

Recently, I promised that I would not inflict anything further upon you regarding home gardens this year. You may recall, however, that I did not commit myself relative to gardens for 1932, so today I am starting my home improvement and live at home campaign for the year 1932.

All things considered, this fall, winter and spring will be the best time in the history of this country for those of you who live on farms, or who have fairly large areas of ground surrounding your homes, to improve your lawns, gardens, and general plantings around your homes. Before I begin to outline my general plan for the 1932 garden and home improvement campaign, allow me to refer to a little history. Beginning on February 22 and continuing until Thanksgiving 1932 we are to celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington. To many of you George Washington may stand out mainly as a military leader and a statesman, but to those of us who live around the city of Washington, and know Mt. Vernon, the home of George Washington, he appears first as a farmer and a gardener. He was a farmer on a large scale even as viewed in the light of present day operations. The Mt. Vernon estate consisted of five large farms, and many of the individual fields contained from 100 to 132 acres. Some of the pasture fields included over 200 acres, but 120 acres seemed to have been about the average size of the cultivated fields. When one considers the fact that modern farming machinery was unknown in those days, the farming operations of Washington were on a comparatively larger scale than most of our farming operations today.

The point that I want to bring to your attention, however, is the fact that with all of Washington's activities as leader of the army, as a statesman, and as a farmer, he found time for what he called his botanical garden in which he grew many trees and plants, not native to the vicinity of Washington. Many of these were contributed by his friends. Washington kept a trained gardener and spent much time and energy on his botanical garden, also on his general flower garden, and his vegetable garden.

Washington's favorite Bible quotation about the "shade of his own vine and fig tree" was not a figure of speech, for he had grape vines and fig trees planted on the warm side of the garden wall, and especial provision was made for growing many plants native of other climates. Washington's favorite recreation was to get away from all matters of politics and Government, and to study and write about the different crops that he had growing in his garden, and on his farm.

Taking the great Washington as our example, would it not be appropriate that we in 1932 on the two hundredth anniversary of his birth celebrate this Bi-Centennial by creating around our homes, gardens that would bear out the ideals of Washington as he carried them out at Mt. Vernon. With the possibility

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of fewer acres in money crops on many farms, the season of 1932 will doubtless be an opportune time for carrying out some such ideal in the development of the home surroundings. This ideal would naturally include the planting of trees, the improvement of the lawn, the provision for a home supply of fruits, and also a good vegetable garden. In other words, let us adopt a plan for the general improvement of our home surroundings, and while the improvement cannot all be made in one year, 1932 will be a good time to make a start, and like the building of the mansion, at Mt. Vernon, it will not all be done in one year, but over a period of many years, and our homes like Mt. Vernon, may by constant improvement over a long period, come to be what Mt. Vernon was to Washington, the realization of our ideals.

While the celebration of the Bi-Centennial will center here in the City of Washington, it will be observed throughout the land, in fact, I would like to suggest that you plan a little celebration entirely your own. Let us start immediately and give the old home surroundings a good clean-up - repair the fences where fences are necessary - rearrange the shrubbery - improve the lawn - plant a few shade trees, and, last but not least, give the home fruit and vegetable garden a real clean-up, and get them in shape for a banner year in 1932.

If you want something by way of a guide in this work, I would suggest that you get a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-0-8-7, entitled "Beautifying the Farmstead." This bulletin gives practical suggestions on how to improve the surroundings of the farm home, and by the way, it will also serve quite well as a guide in the improvement of large town lots and small country places. It is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-0-8-7.